

AMENDMENTS TO THE SPECIFICATION

Please replace the first paragraph at page 1 with the following amended paragraph:

The present invention relates to a method to guarantee for a service a bandwidth across an access network with a quality of service, as described in the preamble of claim 1, and to an access network wherein the method is applied, as described in the preamble of claim 7.

Please replace the fifth paragraph at page 5 with the following amended paragraph:

According to the invention, this object is achieved by the method defined in claim 1 and by the access network defined in claim 7 according to a first, second and third embodiment.

Please replace the second complete paragraph at page 7 with the following amended paragraph:

Three of them are defined in the claims 2 and 8, 3 and 9, 4 and 10 respectively following embodiments.

Please replace the third complete paragraph at page 7 with the following amended paragraph:

In the first embodiment (claims 2 and 8), one adapts the capacity of the so-identified virtual connection for it to convey the required bandwidth with the required QoS, provided there are enough resources available in the access network to do so, or alternatively provided the CAC of the network elements across which the virtual connection is established grants the permission to do so. One can either provision a suitable bandwidth for that virtual connection or set the

policer parameters to allow more cells to cross the UNI and the NNI. By fitting closer to the real traffic demand, one can transport more traffic across the access network than one could if the virtual connections were left as provisioned initially.

Please replace the fourth complete paragraph at page 7 with the following amended paragraph:

In the second and third embodiments (claims 3 and 9, 4 and 10 respectively), a path is provisioned across the access network, over which a number of virtual connections are multiplexed. The path is provisioned between the node whereto the subscribers are connected and the edge node, or between any intermediate nodes.

Please replace the first complete paragraph at page 8 with the following amended paragraph:

The multiplexing can be manifold:

- in the second embodiment (claims 3 and 9), the virtual connections are aggregated one with each other over the path, the CAC means being preliminarily disabled so as to aggregate more virtual connections than there are bandwidth available,
- in the third embodiment (claims 4 and 10), a virtual connection is dynamically connected to the path when the first service to be delivered over that connection is granted, and dynamically disconnected when the last granted service is completed.

Please replace the third complete paragraph at page 8 with the following amended paragraph:

~~Another~~ In another characterizing embodiment of the present invention, is defined in the claims 5 and 6. ~~The~~ the bandwidth provisioned for the path is determined according to a statistical traffic law, given a number of virtual connections multiplexed over the path, an estimated or measured traffic load per user and a service deny probability. The way around, a path may also get a pre-determined bandwidth, such as the one enforced by a physical link. Then, the number of virtual connections that are multiplexed over the path is determined according to a traffic law, given that pre-determined available bandwidth, an estimated or measured traffic load per user and a service deny probability. The traffic law could be for instance the Erlang law, assuming a Poisson distribution of the network usage over the subscribers.